



# Jeremy Harder

## Hungarian *Gépkocsizó Lovász Század*

### Eastern Front



Motorized Fusilier Company  
1st Hungarian Motorized Brigade, 1st Armored Field Division,  
2nd Hungarian Army

*18 June, We left 'amid silent people and sad sounds of bugles', destined for the 'blood-soaked land of Russia'. Mother of God guarding over Hungary, pray for us and defend us from all sins and disasters! Amen.'"*

*"Everywhere crushed Russian tanks can still be seen. We look at them and fear the idea of this Red hell moving against Hungary. Thanks be to God that this has been stopped. We are firmly confident that we shall smash the Red danger for Europe.'"*

-- Diary entries from Corporal István Balogh, 1st Hungarian Motorized Brigade, taken from his body on the bank of the Don River three months later



Area of Operations

This Flames of War Company represents units of a Gépkocsizó Lovász Század (Motorized Fusilier Company) from the 1st Hungarian Motorized Brigade, 1st Armored Field Division, 2nd Hungarian Army involved in the Battles for Uryv in the summer and autumn of 1942, northwest of Stalingrad. The focus of the Uryv battles was to repulse Soviet bridgeheads across the Uryv, Karotyak, and Stutye Rivers.



When the Hungarian government signed the Tripartite Pact with Italy and Germany in 1940 and entered the war as part of the Axis in 1941, it was not to be part of Hitler's vision of a new Europe, but rather to regain territory lost for their role in the First World War. Under the rule of Regent Admiral Horthy, Hungary began to regain territory, the First Vienna Award in 1938 returned lost territory from Slovakia and Ruthenia. Following the German invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1939, and with German approval, Hungary was able to reclaim the remainder of Ruthenia. In 1940, under the Second Vienna Award, Hungary received large parts of Transylvania from Romania.

When Operation Barbarossa commenced in 1941, Hungarian politicians were split about supporting Germany as the Soviet Union had offered to support Hungary's territorial claims against Romania in exchange for Hungarian neutrality. Hungary's decision to enter the war was made following an alleged Soviet bombing raid on the cities of Kassa and Munkács on June 26, 1941, the following day the Hungarians declared war on the Soviet Union.

The initial invasion consisted of the Carpathian Army Group, formed from units stationed in the Carpathian Mountains opposite the Soviet frontier and was composed of the 1st Mountain Brigade, the 8th Border Guard Brigade, 24th Artillery Regiment, and the Mobile Corps. From July to November 1941 the Mobile Corps lead the Hungarian advance; moving from positions in the Carpathians to Mecsebelovka, just to the south of Kharkov.



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In December 1941, Admiral Horthy decided to limit Hungary's involvement in further Russia operations to the minimum, contributing an army of three corps and one armored division. The Hungarian 2nd Army consisted of III Corps (6th, 7th and 9th Light Divisions), IV Corps (10th, 12th and 13th Light Divisions), VII Corps (19th, 20th and 23rd Light Divisions), and the 1st Armored Field Division. As the new Hungarian 2nd Army was being moved to the front the Germans launched Operation *Fall Blau* on June 28, 1942. The Hungarian units that took part in the initial attack were the III Corps HQ, the 7th and 9th Light Divisions, and elements of the III Corps troops. During the operation Hungarian troops - initially equipped with Hungarian weapons were re-supplied with German weaponry to ease logistical problems - took Staryi Oskol on July 4 and by July 7 the III Corps leading units had reached the Don River.



The Hungarians had barely fortified their positions behind the Don River when the Soviets launched attacks to establish bridgeheads at Uryv, Karotyak and Stuty. The Hungarians counter-attacked with the newly arrived 1st Armored Field Division, pushing the Soviets out of Uryv into a small bend in the Don River to the north of the town. During the first Battle of Uryv on 27 July, the Hungarian armored troops destroyed 21 T-34 tanks. Unfortunately, the attack was suspended when ammunition supplies ran low. A second attempt to crush the Uryv bridgehead was made on August 10, but Soviet resistance proved tough and after taking high casualties the Hungarians were forced to withdraw. On 9 September, the final attempt - organized and planned by the Germans - was made to destroy the Uryv bridgehead. Taking part in the attack were the Hungarian 7th, 12th, 13th and 20th Light Divisions, supported by the 1st Armored Field Division, and one German Division of the XXIV Panzer-Corps. However, after five days of heavy fighting the attack was broken off, both sides sustained substantial casualties and the Hungarian troops were left to fortify the positions in the area and seal off the Soviet bridgehead.



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